



CHAMBER

SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA

Lake Charles Mtg 2-22-11
Congress

A resolution expressing support for the concept of Southwest Louisiana staying a part of a congressional district tied with Lafayette and the coastal parishes due to reapportionment of congressional representative districts.

WHEREAS, the State Legislature will be going into special session between March 3, 2011 to April 4, 2011 and will be dealing with reapportionment issues involving legislative state and federal legislative districts among other related matters and it has been determined that the State of Louisiana will lose one of its seven congressional districts;

WHEREAS when Louisiana became the 18th state admitted to the Union in April of 1812, the communities known today as Lafayette and Lake Charles served as anchors for this combined Congressional seat for nearly seventy five years. As the population grew, the cities were split into separate congressional seats and again joined together for the last 40 plus years.

WHEREAS, the City of Lake Charles is currently a part of the 7th Congressional District which is composed of the City of Lafayette and the areas of south central and Southwest Louisiana including the all of the parishes of Calcasieu, Allen, Jefferson Davis, Acadia, St. Landry and the coastal parishes of Cameron and Vermillion;

WHEREAS, as currently configured the component geographic areas of the 7th Congressional District are contiguous and compact and residents thereof have historically shared a strong community of interest in terms of socioeconomics in many vital areas including but not limited to education, oil and gas production and exploration and support services related thereto (both onshore and offshore), farming, petrochemical processing and production, ports and waterways, the Intracoastal Waterway, as well as strong familial and cultural connections which are reflected in the local customs related to food, music, sports and shared support for regional social activities;

WHEREAS, as a result of the proximity of the geographic areas to the Gulf Coast region of the state the citizens and residents of the current geographic areas of the 7th Congressional District also share interests in terms of hurricane protection and emergency preparedness and have historically worked to meet the challenges related to maintaining and protecting the coastal wetland areas of our state;

WHEREAS, the economies and residents of all areas of the current 7th Congressional District are also interconnected and interdependent with each other as a result of their shared relationship via the movement of goods, commerce and people along the I-10/I-12 Corridor and the interrelated state and federal highway system connected thereto;

WHEREAS, the major metropolitan areas of Lafayette and Lake Charles have historically been included together as part of the same congressional district and jointly serve to anchor and provide support for much of the socioeconomic activity in the region;



120 West Pujo Street • Lake Charles, LA
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 3110, Lake Charles, LA 70602-3110
Phone: 337.433.3632 • Fax: 337.436.3727
www.allianceswla.org

WHEREAS, to configure a new congressional district which separates the major metropolitan areas of Lake Charles and Lafayette and surrounding communities would be contrary to the established legal principles which govern the reapportionment of federal legislative districts including but not limited to: compactness, contiguity, community of interest, preservation of the historic connection between political subdivisions and could make it difficult for any person elected to represent the varied socioeconomic interests of the region in the U. S. Congress;

WHEREAS, keeping coastal communities together ensures effective representation for not only the region, but also the state; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE Board of Directors of the Chamber SWLA at the regular meeting convened January 10, 2011, that

SECTION 1: All of the above and foregoing is hereby made a part of this resolution.

SECTION 2: The Chamber SWLA does hereby request that in the redrawing of new boundaries for Congressional Districts, the Louisiana Legislature give preference and priority to maintaining the established socioeconomic relationships in the region of Central and Southwest Louisiana and make sure that any new congressional district created for the region include the cities of Lake Charles and Lafayette as part of the same district along with the coastal areas of the state including Cameron and Vermillion Parishes.

SECTION 3: We request that no parish with under 50,000 population have more than two members of the house of representatives or senators.
Consideration be given to Beauregard Parish having one representative if possible

SECTION 4: That due to the tremendous obstacles facing Cameron in the aftermath of two major hurricane destructions, Cameron Parish officials be consulted as to their preferences.

SECTION 5: The President of the Chamber SWLA is hereby directed to forward a certified copy of the resolution to State Representative Mike Danahay, Congressman Charles Boustany, the Honorable Rick Gallot, Chairman, House and Governmental Affairs and the Honorable Robert "Bob" Kostelka, Senate and Governmental Affairs.



Mike Heinen, Chair

Date: 1/20/2011



George Swift, President/CEO

Date: 1/20/11